

HURRICANE FLORENCE 2018 Q & A

Revised: **October 5, 2018**

DFNS

Q. Client has active case in Wake County with CP from 05/10/18 – 10/31/18. She reported today to Craven County that she moved to Craven prior to the storm. Is there anything Craven County can do to help with her food loss? (10/4/2018)

A. Wake County needs to be contacted and have the case transferred today. The case should then be picked up for the mass replacement and supplement. This would apply for a case that are in another county, but client moved to a disaster county are not transferred. **Follow up:** This case cannot be transferred because it is due a recert. Please advise.

A. Have client complete recert and craven can process and after that is completed have Wake transfer the case as soon as possible but no later than 12th.

Q. Client and one child (age 3) receive regular FNS with CP 07/01/18 – 12/31/18. Client came into the agency to apply for DSNAP on 10/04/18. Agency discovered that client had baby on 08/15/18 and that baby had not been added to the active FNS case as client failed to provide proof of application for baby's SSN or SSN. Client provided proof of the baby's SSN today. Are there any additional disaster benefits due for this baby? (10/4/2018)

A. Mom can apply for DFNS for the newborn since he was in the household at the time of the disaster and did not receive a benefit for September. Add just mom and newborn on the DFNS, mom should show as concurrent benefits and receive the 192.00 for the child. The child should now be added as the date the SSN was provided to the active FNS case.

Q. County has a case where the worker failed to get a physical address and a contact number for a customer that applied on 9/29/2018. The error was caught by the supervisor after the customer left. A DSS8650 was sent to the customer by mail to the mailing address provided. Case was closed 10/4/2018. The customer came in today because she got the letter to provide requested information. Is there any way that her case can be rekeyed, and she could receive her benefits? (10/4/2018)

A. Contact NC FAST – this looks like a technical question

Q. Can a Disaster FNS app be withdrawn and rekeyed? (10/4/2018)

A. If you have discovered that an error has been made, then yes you can withdraw and rekey it. Please make sure that the case is documented on why you did what you did and that it was rekeyed.

Q. There are five household members living temporarily in household; 2 households. **First household:** Mother and Son; mom owns the home, son lives in flood prone area and moved back with mom for the storm. **Second household:** Friend and her 2 children were displaced and moved in temporarily with Mother and Son. The Son and Friend came into agency to apply separately for DSNAP. They both listed everyone that is living in the home on the apps. They wanted to apply separately because they each had their separate household prior to the storm. The Son's app was keyed first and approved – provided benefits for all 5 people in home (he was only applying for himself and mother). The friend's app was denied. The county wants to know how to remove benefits from the card and what actions do they need to take to correct the mistake? (10/4/18)

A. There is no way to correct this at this point. Ensure we are asking if the households

purchase and prepare together. As discussed make a PI referral on the two households and have the mom with two kids complete an appeal of her DFNS denial.

Q. Workers want to know if students that are going to school in Wilmington but came to Wilson to apply should they look at their home as their residence or their school residence? (10/4/18)

A. It should be where they live. If they are living in Wilmington and had an adverse effect from the Hurricane, they can apply for themselves. They should apply in Wilmington, but they can apply in any DFNS county.

Q. Client came in and made app for DSNAP. On application, client checked the box that she did not live in a "disaster area" however, she did. The interviewer did not catch the error and put the application through. Client is eligible based on loss of wages. It has already been keyed in NC FAST and a denial notice sent. I know that she can reapply but if she does will NC FAST denial it again based on the prior application? (10/4/18)

A. The system will not look at a prior application to determine eligibility. If the second application is incorrectly being denied, submit a helpdesk ticket.

Q. Workers want to know just for clarification expenses that were used to prepare for storm (generators, food, flashlights, etc....) are considered a disaster related expense? (10/4/18)

A. Yes, all of those would be appropriate.

Q. A resident of Lenoir County applied for DSNAP on 09/28/18. She applied for herself and two other people stating that she was the only one with wages; application was approved and received \$504 as a result on 09/29/18. On 10/02/18, a resident in Onslow County has applied for DSNAP and it was discovered that she was a recipient on that DSNAP application in Lenoir. The Onslow County resident has income that was not included on the other application; however, when the income and expenses are computed, the Lenoir County resident would still have been approved with the stated 3-person household including all income and expenses. The Lenoir application would have been eligible for a 2-person household with just her income and expenses but would have received less. How do I process the Onslow DSNAP application as they are applying for themselves and spouse? Case head has income that should have been counted on the other application and the spouse is unemployed. (10/3/18)

A. Try to contact the client that applied in Lenoir county and ask her about the person she included on her application that states she does not live with her? If it is determined the Onslow client did not actually live with the Lenoir county, client then let Lenoir county client know that she will be charged with an overpayment and send her case to Program Integrity. You will have to contact NCFast help line about how to get the Onslow County application to go through.

Q. We received a visit from USDA today and the USDA representative informed the administrator that an Authorized Representative form needed to be filled out for individuals that could not shop for themselves. The USDA representative informed the administrator that the customer currently being interviewed obviously could not shop for herself and an authorized representative form should be filled out, so that the A/R could shop for the customer. Is this a requirement? If so, does the county follow the same procedure as the USDA representative and use worker observation, or do they ask the customer if they need someone to shop for them? What about when an A/R that comes in with a letter stating that they can apply for an individual and the individual is not with them, would the case need to be pended for this? (10/3/18)

A. We do not need to complete the authorized representative form, DSS-1688 if we have the signed statement from the client and we have verified both the AR and HH's ID.

Q. If during a Fraud investigation, a client who is over income to receive DSNAP benefits (under income at initial approval of DSNAP application but the mother came back to agency and turned in card and reported that the daughter who applied for DSNAP had reported her income incorrectly by \$900.00) , updates their expenses and it makes them eligible, what does the fraud worker do? Let them keep the EBT card and document? Or, destroy the card? The case is active in NC FAST and the benefits are on the EBT card for DSNAP. (10/3/18)

A. If I am understanding this correctly, the income was under reported but now we have the correct income and expenses were updated as they were not reported correctly, so in the end they are eligible? If so, they should get the DFNS benefits and document the case.

Q. A long distance trucker receives a weekly per diem for travel expenses. Would we count this as income for the DSNAP? (10/3/18)

A. This should be either countable income or a loss of income for the weeks covered in the benefit period. Determine through interview which is best representative of the household's income (net or loss) and situation during the benefit period.

Q. The county is starting to get calls from people who have been denied for DSNAP and now want to retract information such as adding additional household members or adding additional expenses so that they will qualify for assistance. How should these applications be handled? Should they be allowed to reapply and adjust their previous statements, or should they be advised of their rights to appeal the decision and request a hearing?

In Part H - Certification and Signature it states that the following: "I certify, under penalty and perjury, that the information I have been given is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge." If applicants are allowed to reapply after the denial has been keyed will NC FAST allow an approval to be processed? (10/3/18)

A. If a client is denied they have the right to a hearing and that is the process they need to take. You cannot prevent anyone from applying or reapplying. If folks reapply with changed information, then the situation is questionable, and county can request verification. These applications should also be flagged, and referrals made to PI.

Q. Client did not incur any disaster related expenses or loss of food. She can't return to work because the hotel is closed due to the storm. Is loss of wages a disaster related expense? (10/2/18)

A. Loss of wages is an adverse effect of the disaster, so she is eligible to apply for DFNS. Refer to EFS_FNS_AL 12-2018.

Q. Client came in to apply for DSNAP for her family and she has two foster children. The way DSNAP policy reads all household members and their income would be counted. (10/2/18)

A. With regular FNS they have the option to include the foster children or not. If they do the income counts. This would be no different for DFNS. Reference: *210.06B-Foster Care Individuals* -Individuals placed in the home of relatives or others by a federal, State, or local governmental foster care program are not eligible to participate in the program as a separate FNS unit from the household providing their care. However, they may be included in the FNS unit at its request. If the FNS unit chooses this option, count foster care payments received as unearned income to the FNS unit

Q. It was my understanding and guidance to the county that individuals from out of state could apply for regular FNS if they intent to stay in NC. Richmond has seen an influx of SC residents form disaster areas and they are questioning the policy. Specifically, AL 12-2018, I.A. Policy Instructions: NOTE: Ineligible or disqualified household members of FNS cases that were active at the time of disaster, including individuals that were active in another state, are eligible for separate disaster benefits as these individuals will not be included with the HH receives a supplement. (10/2/18)

A. The individuals who come from SC but intend to stay in NC can apply for regular FNS or DFNS. What you are referring to below is for anyone who was included in an active FNS household but ineligible and was in a disaster county at the time of the disaster can apply for DFNS. If the individual received in another state and came to NC and lost food in the disaster, they would have to call the state they received in and request a replacement. No individual can receive FNS and DFNS in the same month.

Q. We have a few individuals here who reside in a group home applying for DSNAP. When asked if they suffered a loss, they stated their money goes to the group home. The group home provides the meals to these residents. Are they eligible to receive DSNAP? (10/2/18)

A. No you would follow regular FNS rules for people living in a group home. Their meals are provided so they would not qualify.

Q. If we deny an application because they refuse to sign the application-they find out that they have to report income from another HH member that they don't want to report-they have been screened and the case worker has filled out the DSNAP application except for the income of the HH member and the signature-how do we get that to deny in NC FAST? (10/2/18)

A. They can choose to withdraw the DFNS application or request the income as they will not state what the income is and give them 5 days to provide and deny on 6th day for failure to provide. Refer to: EFS_FNS_AL 12-2018- General procedures

Q. A supervisor from Jones County asked if they have customers who did not apply within the disaster time of Sept 7-Oct. 6, will they be able to go to counties after to apply if they did not make an application? (10/2/18)

A. Jones County, as well as those in the other 27 counties, must apply on or before October 6, 2018. This is the period that has been approved for these counties.

Q. Does the 3rd bullet on the DSS-1678 include loss of wages? See below: I hereby certify under penalty of perjury and/or fraud that I incurred a disaster related expense/damage in the amount of \$. I understand that the supplement will bring my benefits up to the maximum allotment for my household size. Households who have already received the maximum allotment are not eligible for a supplement. (10/2/18)

A. Yes, client must have experienced one of the adverse effects of the disaster

Q. There is a Greene County resident in Wayne County wanting to apply. And, does it matter since Greene County is not part of this "wave"? (10/1/18)

A. Greene has been approved but not until Wednesday, 10/3/2018. They cannot apply for DFNS until Wednesday 10/3/2018.

Q. Can a 21-yr. old living with her parents apply as a separate HH? (10/1/18)

A. No, the 21-yr. old cannot apply as a separate HH.

Q. We have a case where a gentleman came in and applied for himself, his wife and his stepson. When the worker attempted to key the application NCFast showed that the wife and stepson applied for regular FNS benefits in Onslow County (app is still pending). Worker contacted the wife and she stated that she moved out of the husband's home on 9/7/2018 and only returned for a couple of days during the storm. She has since returned to her own residence. Worker then contacted the husband and he stated that the wife and stepson lived with him before the storm and during the storm but has since returned to her residence. I am thinking that the wife and her son would not be included in the husband's application. (10/1/18)

A. the wife and child will not be added to husband's application since wife has a pending application for regular FNS benefits.

Q. Johnston County has an applicant who applied in August for regular FNS benefits. Her application was approved on September 18, 2018. The applicant is in the agency wanting to apply for DSNAP. I have reviewed the administrative letter with agency staff. I am thinking that the client is not eligible for DSNAP because she received benefits in September. I am also thinking she is not eligible for a replacement because she did not lose food purchased with FNS benefits during the time of the disaster. Please advise how the agency needs to proceed. (10/2/18)

A. You are correct, however if she suffered an adverse effect from the storm she can sign an affidavit for a supplement

Q. On the 10/1 pending applications report, several cases in Carteret County are showing "Beyond Time Standard", but they have not been pending more than five days. Please advise why NC FAST is showing incorrect data, as the county is concerned. (10/2/18)

A. The pending applications will show overdue after three days, however if they are pending due to good cause like an 8650 was given to the client, that is ok. I think that confusion is that it will state due within 5 days, but it will change to beyond processing time after day 3. Ensure that the ones showing beyond time frame are ones pending for good cause.

Q. Does an appeal for a DSNAP denial go through the same hearing process as a regular FNS? (10/1/18)

A. A household which has requested a fair hearing is entitled to an immediate onsite supervisory review of any denied application. Households not satisfied with the outcome of this review retain the right to request a fair hearing through the normal process.

Q. Carteret County had an applicant and the spouse passed away a week after Hurricane Florence. He was in the household at the time of the disaster but is no longer in the household. Would this be a household of two since he did purchase/prepare/eat with spouse for a week; or a household of one since he is now deceased? (10/1/18)

A. The reported deceased household member would not be included in the household composition. Income belonging to the non-household member would not be included in the budget when making determination for benefits.

Qa. Is the County required to offer voter registration to each client now? (10/1/18)

Qb. We had an individual show up from the Board of Elections to the DSNAP site trying to solicit the customers to register to vote while they were waiting to apply for DSNAP benefits. She was politely asked to leave, but they wanted to check to see if they had to allow a person from the Board of Elections to be allowed to solicit customers to register to vote at the DSNAP site? (10/1/18)

A. USDA confirmed it was not a requirement to ask about voter registration during DFNS, however if a DSNAP applicant explicitly requests a voter registration form, the DSNAP site should provide one and assist them in completing it to the extent possible. It is the discretion of the county director if they want to provide voter registration to DFNS applicants.

Q. County is asking for instructions on registering individuals when the person applying is not able to provide SSN and DOB for all household members. They have had a few and are concerned with an individual receiving on more than one case because the applicant is not able to provide this information. (9/29/2018)

A. The counties need to make sure they are completing a proper name search for each household before registering the household members in the system to avoid duplicate applications or issuance. The DOB is needed for NCFast Processing. It is a known concern that entering cases without SSN's may cause individuals to receive in more than one case, however, the SSN is not needed.

Q. Client applied for DSNAP on 09/28/18 and was denied. She came back into the agency, changed her story and received an EBT card. The approval was keyed today. The agency discovered the duplication and questioned the client who now wants to close her DSNAP case. How do we stop the card from being activated tonight? (9/29/2018)

A. Have client sign a withdrawal request and call the NC FAST Help desk to see if they can stop the issuance.

Q. Client's daughter came to stay with family prior to the storm because she was having some issues. She was with the family when the disaster hit and plans to be stay with the family for at least 3 more weeks. She still has her own residence but has not been there since a few weeks prior to storm. Would she be included in the DSNAP case? (9/29/2018)

A. If she stayed with them prior to the disaster and is still there then yes include her.

Q. College student living in the dorm comes home because school closes due to impending weather. Student has returned to school. Is the student listed in the HH and eligible for benefits? (9/29/2018)

A. If the student was only there temporarily during the storm and has gone back he should not be included. Did the student live in a disaster area and have an adverse effect from the disaster? Then yes, he could apply on his own.

Q. Grandma lives in disaster county and her 7 family members from a non-disaster county stay with her during the storm. They return home after. Can they be included on grandma's application and receive benefits? (9/29/2018)

A. If the family members only stayed to assist her during the storm and returned to their homes afterward, they would not be considered as living in the disaster area and are not to be included in the DFNS.

Q. Johnston County has two applicants who applied for DSNAP and was approved. The applicants also completed an application for regular FNS and applications are expedited. How should the agency handle the ongoing FNS applicants being that DSNAP was approved from 9/7/18-10/6/18? (9/29/2018)

A. They should process the DFNS applications. Then when they process the regular application they will show ineligible for September due to already receiving benefits.

Q. Hoke County has 4 individuals issuing cards. When the team is ready to issue cards, they will take a certain amount of people to a separate room. 4 people are escorted to the table with the EBT card holder, and 4 additional people are seated against the wall. This way, as soon as one person gets up, they can pull the next person. Will there be a problem having people in the room that are not currently being served (seated against the wall to be served)? (10/1/18)

A. As long as the person or persons issuing the EBT cards deal with one client at a time. Others in the room is not a problem just no more than one client at a time per one worker at a time.

Q. County has a table set up to interview the disabled and elderly. They are asking if they can have another worker sit at the table to distribute EBT cards to those individuals, so that they do not have to be sent to another area. I am not sure if this is allowable. I am thinking they would need to set up a table with two separate individuals to issue the cards. Please advise. (10/1/18)

A. As long as it is not the same worker completing the interview and issuing the cards, it should not be a problem.

Q. Is there any requirement to have a form or having the individuals sign that cards have been corrected? Will USDA have an issue if the County creates a form? (10/1/18)

A. The county is responsible to resolve cases when the SUI and PAN are keyed incorrectly. If the case has not been processed call NCFAST. If the case has been processed they need to literally have the clients return to the agency right away and swap cards.

Q. Client applied for DSNAP received FNS allotment in New York in which client has requested closure because she lives in Pender County. She was in Pender county during hurricane. Is this client eligible for DSNAP? Replacement?

A. If she received regular FNS anywhere during September 2018 she would not qualify for DFNS. If she had a food loss she needs to contact NY and ask for a replacement.

Q. If a worker was checking DSNAP applications for accuracy in the morning can they process DSNAP applications in NCFAST in the afternoon? (10/1/18)

A. There should be a separation of duties. The person screening should not also have keying responsibilities.

Q. DSNAP application entered in NC FAST shows as ineligible due to "failed household situation" but they are eligible. Please advise. (10/1/18)

A. Make certain all household members are not currently active on DFNS or regular FNS. If they are not and you continue to get the error message, call NC FAST help desk at 919-813-5490

Q. Are counties required to provide those approved with the "How to Use the NC EBT card" pamphlet? ((10/1/18)

A. Yes, they are to provide the EBT pamphlet. If more EBT brochures are needed contact Suzanne.harlow@dhhs.nc.gov.

Q. If a person applying has a full power of attorney, do they need an Authorized Representative statement? (9/28/18)

A. No, the power of attorney gives them authorization to sign for the client.

Q. Is it required for the DSNAP counties to hand out copies of the income limits? (10/1/18)

A. No, it is not required but should be provided at client request.

Q. Household consists of 4 individuals, 2 undocumented immigrant parents. There are 2 citizen children receiving in an active FNS case. I understand the 2 undocumented immigrants can apply for DSNAP because they didn't receive FNS benefits for themselves for Sept and citizenship is not eligibility criteria for DSNAP. Would the worker be looking at the HH size of 2 (the 2 that didn't receive FNS for Sept 2018) or do they continue to look at HH size of 4? The admin letter doesn't address what HH size to look at which disqualified individuals from active FNS cases apply for DSNAP because they didn't receive for the disaster period. (10/1/18)

A. They can add all four, the children would be ineligible as receiving concurrent benefits and they will be approved for a HH of 2 for the two undocumented immigrant parents.

Q. Customers are reporting the PIN number cannot be changed. Must the benefits be loaded on the card before the PIN can be changed? (10/1/18)

A. PIN numbers cannot be changed until benefits are loaded. This must be explained to clients.

Q. Does there needed to be a separate line for the elderly and disabled if a line should develop? Do special populations need to be seen and interviewed faster than the other applicants, or just brought in and seated quicker? She also wanted to know for those who are not obviously disabled or elderly, do they need to ask or just wait for the client to voice that they need special assistance? Please advise. (9/28/18)

A. Please ensure that all sites have separate lines/holding areas for disabled and elderly, they can't just move these people from the regular line to the front of the line.

Q. Two applicants who applied for DSNAP and was approved. The applicants also completed an application for regular FNS and applications are expedited. How should the agency handle the ongoing FNS applicants being that DSNAP was approved from 9/7/18-10/6/18? (9/28/18)

A. They should process the DFNS applications. Then when they process the regular application they will show ineligible for September due to already receiving benefits.

Q. The county has one blue "In Just for All" and wants to make copies to hang them throughout the facility. The copies will be in black and white NOT blue. (9/28/18)

A. It is acceptable if they are Black and White.

Q. If case is suspended FNS and did not receive October benefit---Should they apply Disaster? (9/28/18)

A. They would not have received October benefits yet. If you meant September, then they have a choice to apply for DFNS or to recertify

Q. If certified case and the parent was ineligible for benefits due to disqualified then they would apply for Disaster? (9/28/18)

A. Yes - refer to Administrative letter

Q. Who must be included in the DFNS application? (9/28/18)

A. Household composition is established as of the date the disaster struck. A household includes those people living together, purchasing and preparing food together at the time of a disaster. D-SNAP household does not include those people with whom applicants are temporarily staying due to the disaster. People living together but eat separately can apply for DFNS separately. Example: 2 Brothers live together. They do not eat together. They can apply separately for DFNS.

Q. Is there a separate form for rights and responsibilities applicants should be receiving?
(9/28/18)

A. No just the information on the DFNS application – penalty warning, etc.

Q. Once an individual has been found eligible, the client takes a seat in a section. The worker is taking the approved application and calls client out by first and last name when they are ready to escort them to the EBT card section. Is it Ok to call client by name? Want to make sure we are not breaking any confidentiality rules. (9/28/18)

A. That is fine to call them by name.

Q. Is there is any directive on late recertifications being turned in and client has come to request a replacement. Case is still suspended. County stated that there was some sort of directive on how to complete these. (9/28/18)

A. Client can complete affidavit for August benefits. Client has two options:

- County can complete the late recert to determine eligibility for September, if eligible benefits for September will be prorated **or**
- Complete a DSNAP application to determine if the client is eligible to receive DSNAP if eligible client will receive the full allotment for September. After approving the DSNAP application key the late recert the next day. NC FAST will push the certification to October since the client received September benefits already.

Q. Worker keyed application for household of one, disabled. Decision is giving a split decision. Worker keyed correct DOA. Showing eligible for September 28th through October 6th and ineligible for October 7th through October 31st. for the ineligible decision it states client did not live in the disaster area at time of disaster. All dates start with 9/28/18. Would county need to send a helpdesk ticket? (9/28/18)

A. Yes, the county should send Help Desk ticket.

Q. Client trying to set pin and getting message, “cannot process due to incomplete records”, any ideas? (9/28/18)

A. If the batch file has not been processed then the client's DOB or SSN will not be in the system. This information is required to change the pin.

Q. Customer completed application outside. It was not signed. When the county ran hits, they are active FNS. Does the interview see them, get them to sign and deny or refer to ongoing? If it is signed is it a denial? (9/28/18)

A. Whoever is controlling the lines make sure they are letting the customers know DSNAP is only for individuals who are not already receiving FNS. Give the customer the option if they want to withdraw or go through the interview process but let them know the DSNAP application will be denied because they are already receiving FNS. Signed DSNAP applications will be denied if they are already receiving FNS. All client's must be interviewed to be screened, even if they have already completed their application, to see if they are possibly eligible, that is how you know if you give them a card. If the client left without signing and not being interviewed contact the client to get a signature.

Q. Can more than 2 people issue EBT cards? (9/28/18)

A. Yes. The minimum requirement is 2.

Q. Is the net income of 17-year-old full time high school student counted? She is not the head of household. (9/28/18)

A. We would always follow normal FNS rules with DFNS, except for the rules that are waved, such as ABAWD, disqualified individuals etc. You would not count the 17 y/o's income, who is not HH or emancipated.

Q. Are temporary staff are required to complete day sheets or any other tracking forms? (9/28/18)

A. Depending on whether they are doing eligibility, crowd control, etc. the coding would look different. Counties should contact their LBL if they need coding help. (10/3/18)

Q. Is ePass generating the DSNAP application from that link, and not the regular at FNS application? (9/28/18)

A. Yes, ePass is generating the DSNAP application from the link.

Q. Clarification in household members section. #4-part B. If households lived together but ate separate prior to the disaster - one application or two? (9/28/18)

A. If two households that under regular FNS can be separate because they eat separate, can be separate for DFNS also. (revised 10/3/18)

Q. Clarification what address needs to be listed on the disaster application. Physical verses mailing. We need mailing for notices but we need the physical for disaster location but there is only one line? (9/27/18)

A. If the client has a permanent and mailing address make a notation on the application that the temporary address is the mailing address.

Q. Since many counties have military population, are we looking at their BAH (housing) and other allowances that they receive, as income? (9/25/18)

A. If the income is accessible it is countable. Refer to the Admin. Letter 10-2018. It states to count the "total net (take home) income" received during the benefit period which is September 7, 2018 through October 6, 2018. All military pay should be included for purposes of D-SNAP income. Also, remember regular eligibility requirements for FNS are not the same as DSNAP.

Q. Policy states that applicants must apply in their county of resident and D-SNAP has not yet been authorized. How do we assist this applicant today? Do we take the paper application and send to the county of resident per policy even though that county is closed, or will we be able to assist this applicant with their needs for FNS benefits for that county? (9/18/18)

A. You need to determine if the client is planning to stay in the current county, is that going to be their permanent residence? if so then you would take the application for your county. If not, which I would think most of them will return to their county of residence prior to the disaster, you would need to ask if they want to apply for regular FNS or DSNAP. You would need to explain the difference. If they want DSNAP, when DSNAP begins, which will be only in designated counties, they would have to go to one of those counties to apply – that is where the DSNAP cards are. If the client wants to apply for regular benefits in your then, take and process the application and transfer it back to the original county of residence. One thing to keep in mind is where to mail the card.

FNS REPLACEMENTS AND SUPPLEMENTS

Q1. A client never reported move to another county. The case from a system standpoint remains in the original county. The case can't transfer to the residence county because it's in review status as the county is not eligible for automatic extension. This household has not

received the supplement or 60% replacement benefits and has now turned in a replacement affidavit for additional benefits. Please let us know if we should manually extend her CP and then transfer the case and then issue her replacement benefits and hope NCF picks the case up for the manual supplement? (9/28/18)

A. This client would be treated as being recipient in the original county since it was not reported nor transferred. They will have to apply for manual replacement benefits for whatever amount she says she lost up to the maximum of her monthly benefit amount. If she gets the replacement benefit, she will also receive the automatic supplement. The original county will need to complete the recertification prior to transferring the case to current residence county.

Q2. Client with a Yadkin County FNS case and previously in Onslow county but has not been there since 6/2015. She called stating \$41.00 in benefits was put on her card. Research shows the client moved back to Yadkin Co. A county transfer is not showing in the system; it is reading as if she is still there. Can the client spend the \$ 41.00 on the card? (9/26/18)

A. If the client does live in Yadkin County and was not living in Onslow County at the time of the hurricane, then no she is not eligible to spend those benefits. (9/25/18)

Q3. It was stated to continue with manual replacements until the auto mass replacements were done on 9/26. On the food loss waiver (Administrative Letter 8-2018 dated 9/18/18) it states replacements can be completed until 10/15/18. Which is correct? (9/25/18)

A. Revised instruction for the 14 counties approved for the mass replacement issuance are included in Administrative Letter 11-2018, dated September 24, 2018

Q4. Client came to Columbus County office to apply for replacement benefits, however, she is currently living in another county and receiving FNS benefits. She has been in Columbus County for past two weeks during the storm with her mother. Client is upset about the fact that she cannot receive any replacement benefits. She states that she lost her food in the storm because she brought food with her to her mother's home. Can a client can apply for Regular Food Replacement if she suffered a food loss, but she did not live in an identified Disaster County? (9/25/18)

A. Per Admin Letter 8-2018 dated September 18, 2018, households must be allowed to request replacement benefits in the county of their residence or the county where they may be residing temporarily. (9/24/18)

Q5. Household completed a replacement affidavit for \$680.00 but has a claim in EPICS. Will NC FAST allow benefits to be issued because this is a replacement due to Florence. (9/25/18)

A. Yes, this will not go into their claim.

Q6. Client comes in to complete the DSS 1678. Client's FNS case closed 8/31/18. Are cases that were not certified during September 2018 potentially eligible for replacement benefits? Per Admin letter 8-2018, section III states that "replacement benefits will be for the amount of food loss of either August 2018 or September 2018 benefits, depending on which benefit month the household received prior to September 13, 2018". FNS Manual Section 910 speaks to food purchased. I am unable to locate any policy that states the household must be certified. (9/24/18)

A. Replacements are always based on the month of issuance. If the client reported that they lost food that was purchased with August benefits due to the disaster then you can look at replacing those benefits up to the maximum amount they received (not the max allotment), per Section 910.01. Whether the case is open or closed has no bearing on replacements. You cannot replace September benefits because they never received September benefits.

If this is a displaced individual who resided in another county prior to Hurricane Florence, you need to determine if they are planning to stay in the current county – is that going to be their permanent residence? If so, then you would take the application as an application in your county? If not, such as planning to return to the county where they resided prior to the disaster, you would need to ask if they want to apply for regular FNS or DFNS. And you would need to explain the difference.

Q7. I know we are looking at each case separately. Should we be replacing benefits if the power went out for a short period of time (two hours)? (9/20/18)

A. It is my understanding that two hours does not constitute an extended period and, based on how policy is written, it does not appear they are eligible for a replacement. USDA states that power outage must be at least 4 hours. It is recommended that the county use prudent judgement and ensure policy is applied consistently.

Q8. If we deny the request for replacement benefits should we send a notice? If so, what notice do we send? (9/20/18)

A. When the replacement request is entered via NC FAST a DSS-8652 is generated; however, if the replacement is denied prior to entering the request in NC FAST a manual notice of disposition should be sent via the DSS-8562 (Effect Change) instead of the DSS-8551. The DSS-8562 gives the client rights to a hearing request.

Q9. Do we know what the verbiage should be on the DSS-8562? I checked previous notices today and one said, “There has been no change in your FNS allotment” Remarks: there was a change in your allowable deduction”. Another notice said “your FNS allotment has been changed from \$352 to \$353 starting on 10/1/2018. Remarks: “There was a change in your allowable deductions.”

When we send a manual DSS-8562 for denying the supplement what should we put on the notice? I was not aware that they could request a hearing for this, would this be a State hearing? (9/20/18)

A. The policy does not state that you must send a notice, but the hearing policy says that you must give them a right to a hearing if they are “aggrieved” by any action taken by the DSS. OST concurs that the DSS-8562 is the most appropriate form and you can simply put the decision and the reason why in the remarks section. Considering this does not really have anything to do with their normal allotment, it wouldn’t be appropriate to fill out the first three blocks.

Q10. We have a client from Wilmington that was evacuated and wants to apply for FNS as they do not have any food. We are aware that DSNAP has not been activated and all applications are to be regular FNS. We do have some questions about how to help these individuals without causing them further hardship yet staying within policy. (9/18/18)

1. Can we take/accept these applications as the client lives out of county and are only here temporarily? (FNS 305.02 and FNS 305.06.D)
2. Do we process these applications or fax them to their county of residence?
3. Can we take statement of income for the base period and/or statement that they are currently not working as the business is closed for an unknown period of time? (FNS 4060.1)

A. You can advise the household that they can choose to make an application in their new county and all regular FNS rules apply or they can choose to wait and apply for Disaster FNS (DFNS) in one of the 18 counties once it starts. If they want DFNS then when the DFNS

program begins, which will be only in designated counties, they would have to go to one of those counties to apply. It is important to explain this to them thoroughly. If they want to apply for regular benefits, your county can take and process the application and transfer it back to the client's county of residence. One thing to keep in mind is where would the card be mailed to if the application is approved. (9/18/18)

Q11. Is anything different with Disaster replacement than regular restoration/supplement policy if they have an outstanding overpayment? Do the replacements have to be applied to claims? (9/18/18)

A. Replacement benefits do not go towards claims.

Q12. I wanted to ask for clarification on the actual replacement of benefits from the Administrative Letter, "the replacement will be for the amount of food loss of September". What if the client has yet to receive September benefits and it was August allotment? Are we replacing those benefits/food lost? Or, September benefits only for those whom have already received and lost for this month? (9/18/18)

A. Look at what month benefits were used to purchase the lost food. If they have not received September benefits, then clearly, they could not have lost any food purchased with the September benefits if they did not receive them prior to the disaster. You would look at any loss of food purchased with August benefits using your normal replacement policy. 910.01.

Q13. Customer reported a new roof and payments starting 8/2018 from Habitat. If this was from Hurricane Matthew damages we would allow the deduction from what I am reading in policy. Is that correct? (9/18/18)

A. That is correct. However, Hurricane Matthew was on 10/8/2016. How are these repairs connected to a natural disaster from almost 2 years ago? If this is correct, I would expect to find good supportive verification of such in the file.

Q14-a. Please advise how much of an August benefit of \$508 can be replaced when it was issued on August 19, 2018 and the client states all her food in freezer and refrigerator spoiled. She has not gotten her September benefit yet. The value exceeds her \$508 allotment of August 2018. (9/17/18)

Q14-b. We are coming across clients that have not received their September benefits that are stating that they lost food that was purchased using EBT in August.

A. There are currently no provisions for food purchased with August benefits. Admin letter 7-2018 only specifies loss of food that was purchased with September benefits. Additionally, the press release issued this afternoon (<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/news/press-releases/north-carolinians-enrolled-food-and-nutrition-services-program-can-use-benefits>) states that "Also beginning today, families who have a loss of food purchased with their September FNS benefits will have longer than the normal 10 days to report the loss to receive replacement benefits. Families will have until Oct. 15 to request a replacement." EFS_FNS_AL-8-2018 was amended September 18, 2018 to include replacements for August or September.

Counties should be asking questions to determine the loss, such as how much food did they lose? If they got their benefits on 9/3 and are reporting a loss from the day of the storm on 9/14, how much food did they lose? Did they live in an area that was impacted (keeping in mind that many counties did have loss of electricity, so it could be more than just those on the coast)?

Q15. What verification should we request for clients who reside in Florence affected areas to verify need for replacement benefits if they are temporarily residing in another county? (9/17/18)

A. FNS policy has provided guidance that they do not believe a collateral contact is needed. Counties should be asking questions to determine the food loss.

Q16. We have a displaced family from Onslow County. She states that they cannot go back home but they do not have any benefits left on their card. She states that she does not know if her food has been destroyed or not. She was in the office to try to get some help. She stated that Onslow DSS was under water and she did not know what to do about food. Her benefits are due to be loaded on her card for September on the 21st. What do we tell her to do as she does not want to miss that window of applying for disaster benefits when her county takes the applications? (9/17/18)

A. Replacement benefits may not be issued for August; therefore, from a policy aspect, she will need to wait for her September benefits to be issued to use her EBT card. As a best practice, you may refer her to any food banks or other community supports in Onslow County that may be able to assist until her benefits are available on 9/21. EFS_FNS_AL-8-2018 was amended September 18, 2018 to include replacements for August or September.

Q17-a. Are we allowed to approve affidavits for replacements from other counties? We are getting customers that have been displaced due to Hurricane Florence and are wanting to report food loss and request replacements in our county. (9/17/18)

Q17-b. We are unable to determine the correct process of how to handle families that have relocated to Surry County to stay with family due to the Hurricane. We understand policy dictates that we would direct the family to the County they reside in under normal circumstances. With the possibility of the County of their residence being closed, are we correct in taking the application as a courtesy and processing it then transferring it to the County of their residence? Or, should we still be following policy and directing the family to apply in their County of residence? We are not aware of any specific policy regarding "Hurricane Evacuees" which is how the family is presenting to us when they came in the office to apply for FNS. We are aware of Disaster FNS and replacement benefits policy.

A. At this time, you should follow regular FNS policy. If they are a current recipient, they may be eligible for replacement benefits, per Admin Letter 7-2018. If they are applicants, you would follow regular FNS policy for new applicants.

Q18. If a client is from another county, and states they are not allowed to go back home yet. Are they allowed to come to Durham County to get FNS benefits? (9/19/18)

Scenario: FNS Recipient stated family members are at her house and not able to go back home due to flooding. Client stated her family members are FNS recipients of Lenoir County.

A. You can look at doing a replacement for August benefits if they state they lost any food purchased with August, following FNS 910. Otherwise, you can advise the household that they can choose to make an application in their new county and all regular FNS rules apply or they can choose to wait and apply for DSNAP in one of the 18 counties once it starts. If they choose to apply, you would also need to ask various questions to ensure the customer has enough information to make an informed decision.

Q19. Are we allowed to replace September benefits that were received the week following the storm? (9/19/18)

A. Follow normal replacement policies located in FNS Manual Section 905 for benefits reported as loss due to a misfortune as outlined in policy for losses not associated with Hurricane Florence. Refer to Administrative Letter 8-2018 for guidance on replacement benefits due to Hurricane Florence. The administrative letter states the county may replace the amount loss of

either August or September 2018 benefits, depending on which benefit the household received prior to 9/13/2018. If the loss was incurred a week after the storm, replacement falls into the regular replacement policy cited in Section 905.

Q20. I understand based on the Admin letter we are able to assist with replacements for those residing in Alamance County temporarily due to the storm. A client from Sampson County requested replacement FNS but her case is in suspension and she did not receive September benefits. She states she was not able turn in her SR prior to the hurricane. I tried to call Sampson County, but their agency is closed. The letter does not state anything about completing the review or application for someone just the issuance of a replacement. (9/19/18)

A. This would be considered an uncertified household. You can look at doing a replacement for August benefits if they state they lost any food purchased with August, following FNS 910. Otherwise, you can advise the household that they can choose to make an application in their new county and all regular FNS rules apply or they can choose to wait and apply for Disaster FNS (DFNS) in one of the 18 counties once it starts. If they choose to apply, you would also need to ask various questions in order to ensure the customer has enough information to make an informed decision. If they want to apply for regular benefits, your county can take and process the application and transfer it back to the client's county of residence. One thing to keep in mind is where would the card be mailed if the application is approved.

Q21. If an affidavit is received in one of the initial 20 auto replacement counties for a resident of a non-auto replacement county which county should process the replacement? (10/4/18)

A. Either county may process the replacement.

Q22. Admin letter says Food Destroyed in the Disaster-List total amount of food lost or destroyed in the disaster that the household has replaced or will replace. Is that correct? (10/4/18)

A. NO, we should be allowing all food loss during the disaster as a deduction with no regard to if or when it will be replaced.

Q23. Individual applies and is approved for benefits on the same day. (9/24) Benefits are prorated 9/24-9/30. Is it correct that the automated supplement will be issued to give up to the maximum for the full month? (10/3/18)

A. This depends on the county they are in. If they are one of the 20 counties that were approved for supplements then yes, however, if they were in one of the eight counties not approved for supplements, they would need to come in and sign an affidavit to get the supplement.

Eight counties not approved for Supplements: Beaufort, Cumberland, Greene, Johnston, Lenoir, Pitt, Wayne and Wilson.

Q24. Wilson County wants to know if expense and loss are interchangeable terms because when reaching out to NCFast for them to do the supplement for the manual replacement that the county has already done NC Fast is asking for the loss and they are giving the expense like (Flashlights, batteries, etc.) but NC FAST is saying that is not considered a loss. This is what they are referring to:

FNS Households that were active at the time of the disaster in Beaufort, Cumberland, Johnston, Lenoir, Pitt, Wayne and Wilson Counties, that had a disaster related loss but did not lose food, must make a request for a supplement by signing an affidavit, attesting to a non-food loss, use the DSS-1678 (Rev.09/18) REPLACEMENT/SUPPLEMENT AFFIDAVIT. To have this

supplement processed, call the Disaster Support number at 919-813-5490. Please clarify. (10/4/2018)

A. For a client to request a manual supplement that did not have food loss (meaning they did not request a replacement for food loss), the client only needs to sign the affidavit to state that they had an expense or loss and the amount. If the client already provided an affidavit for food loss, NC FAST will pick those up and supplement them.

Manual supplement affidavits would be if the client experienced one of the following:

- Damage to or destruction of the household's home or self-employment; or
- Lost or inaccessible income, including reduction or termination of income, or a delay in receipt of income for residents of the impacted counties; or
- A disaster related expense that will be paid or anticipated to be paid during the benefit period, which will not be reimbursed during the period of September 7, 2018 through October 6, 2018. (including flashlight, batteries, plywood, tarps. etc.)

RECERTIFICATIONS

Q1 Our clerical staff "starts" recertifications in NC FAST as a balance and checks measure for monitoring recertifications. This morning, they reported the error, "Case not due for recertification". I assume this is because of extension of certification periods. Please advise when we will be able to start them in NCFast. (9/24/18)

A. USDA did approve a Certification Extension Waiver for September and October recertifications for the 18 Individual Assistance Counties. DSS Admin Letter 9-2018 provides all the information regarding the waiver.

Q2. It was my understanding that late recerts would not receive supplement. Cert. period ended 8/31/2018. Client came in and completed late recert on 9/24/2018. The county has a late recert dated 9/24/2018 and the case received a supplement. Is this correct? (10/1/18)

A. Yes this is correct. If a household receives September benefits and they are in one of the mass supplement approved counties (refer to admin letter) they will get a mass supplement. If they are in one of the 7 counties not approved for mass supplement – the only way they would get an automatic supplement is if they requested a replacement and were approved.

Q3. Will it pick them (late recerts) up in the automated batches once the system recognizes that the HH receives a benefit for September? (10/1/18)

A. Yes

Q.4 Should the county accept late recert and process or have the client apply for DSNAP? (10/1/18)

A. The client can apply for DFNS but must do it prior to processing the recertification. Then when you do the recertification the household will show ineligible for Sept. because they already received but would be eligible ongoing.

Q5. The ongoing applications that were taken on yesterday are expedite applications. The agency wants to know if it is necessary to close the DSNAP applications approved on yesterday so that the ongoing expedite applications can be keyed? (9/29/2018)

A. They should not show as expedited since they received in Sept for DFNS. When they process the regular FNS case it will show concurrent benefits for September.

OTHER

Q1. Clients are coming to our agency from an IA County to apply for Crisis benefits. Can you advise if we should proceed in taking this application? The CIP manual clearly states they should apply in the county they reside, has this been waived this since some county offices are closed? (9/24/18)

A. Energy does not do disaster however, counties should continue to take applications as they normally would. They cannot do applications from counties with closed offices because monies will be taken from the wrong county.

Q2. Are agencies supposed to have WIC pamphlets available for applicants? (10/1/18)

A. We have no information regarding WIC requirements. They will need to reach out to their Health Dept. for that information.

Q.3 County employee had to mandatory worked shelter and received shelter pay during this time. Does the shelter pay received counted as income for DSNAP? (10/1/18)

A. All take home pay is counted. So yes, it would count.

Q4. Chatham Co. is not taking D-snap applications however, we have had a lot of calls and office visits thinking we are. We do not want to discourage any one from applying for benefits, but we were wondering if we could put up a sign that tells clients that we have not been approved for D-snap assistance and are not taking D-snap application at this time, however they can apply for FNS benefits. (10/2/18)

A. Yes, that will be fine.

Q5. Case scenario. Active FNS case. Case used to be a Davidson County case. At some point, client moved to Robeson. Davidson County changed the case owner and did not follow the correct county transfer policies. From what I can tell, it appears that Davidson has continued to complete recerts. FNS HH can request replacement benefits. However, the system did not recognize the case for receipt of the automatic supplements or mass replacements because by not following the correct county transfer, while the system shows the correct Robeson County address, NCFASST considers the case to be a Davidson County case which is not one of the 27 DSNAP counties. Is there anything we can do to assist this FNS HH with the additional benefits? It doesn't seem fair to the FNS HH to be penalized because a county didn't follow the correct county transfer procedures. (10/2/18)

A. Send in a Help Desk ticket.

Q6. We have a client stating they submitted FNS and MAGI applications via ePass. She has her confirmation numbers, reference numbers and status of pending. Submitted date was early Friday morning, 9/28/2018. When searching specifically for the application reference numbers in NCF no application is found. There are also no submitted applications attached to the person's application tab on person page. Is there a way to verify if the applications were submitted successfully? (10/2/18)

A. Please submit a Help Desk ticket if the ePass application cannot be retrieved.